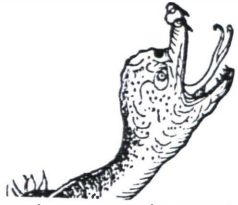


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#### BEHEMOTH

- Crocodiles: A 1.50m/5ft crocodile was observed on June 8 in the Marne River at Bry. Although policemen and the fire brigade searched the river after the sighting, they searched in vain, although a policeman said he'd seen the creature too.

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 10 June, p.24) The Marne is a 525 km long river which flows into the Seine southeast of Paris. Meanwhile, in Germany, Jörg Zars, owner of the pet caiman Sammy which escaped into a bathing lake last summer, is charged to pay 18,000 DM compensation for the coast police and lake owners had tracing and hunting the "monster". Zars argues the costs were needless, as any expert could have told officials that his tiny caiman was completely harmless. (Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 8 June, p. 17)

- Loch Ness: I have received issue Nr. 2 of Andreas Trottmann's "Loch Ness News-clipping Service" (address: A. Trottmann, Les Pretresses, 1586 Vallamand VD, Switzerland). It contains news reports about a "puma" sighting three miles north of Fort Augustus on January 31, 95, by Colin Mackay; information and discussion about new tourist schemes at Loch Ness and the Great Glen, including a tourist centre at Urquhart Castle and a new hiking track along the ridges of the Great Glen; also, clips on the surgeon's photo, Nessie hunters Steve Feltham and Thierry Régall (who hunts Nessie per pendulum). You will also find clips and photos on the bottlenose dolphin's attacks on harbour porpoises in Moray Firth, mentioned in Bilk an issue or two ago. I can only recommend a subscription, in addition to a sub to the Nessletter, for all those who want to keep informed.

- Bibliography: Giant beaver, Moline, Illinois (INFO Journal 72, p. 50); dog-faced catfish, Clear Lake, California (INFO Journal 72, p. 51, was also in Bilk some issues ago); a "dragon" or iguana comes out of a strange cloud in Veracruz, Mexico, on March 16, 1994 (INFO Journal 72, p. 46); more information on the surgeon's photo hoax of Nessie from April 1, 1934, in the Nessletter 121, with precise discussion of details and criticism (Nessletter: Rip Hepple, Huntshieldford, St John's Chapel, Weardale, Co Durham, DL 13 1RQ, UK)

#### LEVIATHAN



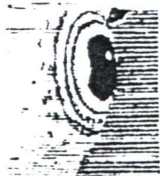
- Chesapeake Bay: This could also come under Isis: In September 1994, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service searched for a manatee seen several times off Queen Anne's County, Maryland. (INFO Journal 72, p. 52) Was it an out-of-place seacow, a mermaid or Chessie? The INFO Journal lists other unusual creatures in Chessie's home, including a 20 ft/6m whale in the Potomac River. Also of interest is an item in the same issue, same page, on seals sighted in

the East River, New York. Any place that sea serpents are seen, you always find enough native and out-of-place marine creatures to conveniently explain the observations.

- Tasmania: The sensation was complete - "Body of a serpent with the head of a horse" screamed the headline in several German newspapers. However, the head was that of a sea-horse, so it was a pretty small sea-serpent. It was one of 20 new species discovered by zoologists in the shallow sea off Tasmania. As oceanologist Peter Last of Tasmania's state scientific organisation CSIRO explained to reporters, zoologists had discovered a new species of skate in the Bathurst Channel in 1988. Now Hobart zoologists further investigated its habitat, the shallow sea (only 30 ft deep) off the southwest coast of the island. The water there is poor in nutrients and has nearly no visibility due to mud washed into the sea by rivers from the Southwest National Park. For the last two years, it was found this stretch of sea harboured up to 20 unknown species, many of which could have existed in symbiosis for several thousand years. As biologist Mike Driessen pointed out, the majority of the animals had not yet be scientifically described. They include a colourful marine slug, species of coral and sponge, the skate and "other animals that seem like straight out of a science fiction movie." None of the article refers further to the "half snake half horse" animal, but they point out the skate was the only species of vertebrate found,

so it cannot have been a sort of sea-horse (or the journalists are poor in biology, which is also possible). Biologists pointed out such animals were normally found in depth of 100 to 300 m, not 10 m, but the dark muddy water had fooled the creatures. (Frankfurter Rundschau, 7 June, p.34; Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 7 June, p.15; Stuttgarter Zeitung 7 June, p.14; taz, 7 June, p.16, quoting dpa news agency, which quotes Australian news agency AAP; I also saw an item about the discoveries, showing slugs and skate and corals, on CNN, in the night from June 5 to 6).

#### KRAKEN



- Bibliography: Two of Germany's most popular science monthlies, "P.M." and "Illustrierte Wissenschaft", had reports on octopi, their intelligence and behavior in their June 1995 editions. Both briefly go into giant octopi and giant squids, but give no details and no new information.

#### MARINE LIFE

- Whales: Third whale stranded within a month at the German North Sea coast. This time, an 8 m whale at Büsum, before this, an 18 m fin whale and a pilot whale (cf. Bilk 65) - Welt, 22 April, p.12; Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 22 April, p. 12; Frankfurter Rundschau 22 April, p.24; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 22 April, p.9 // beluga whale sighted a Frederica, Danemark - Welt 22 May, p. 10.
- Sharks: shark attack in Central America - many papers, 27 May. // 45-year-old woman attacked by a shark at Hongkong. She is the third deadly victim of a shark attack in June in the city - Welt, 14 June, p.12; Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 14 June, p. 17; Stuttgarter Zeitung, 14 June, p. 17; Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 14 June, p. 9; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, June 14.
- The rest: The growing number of crocodiles poses a threat to locals and tourists in Northern Australia - Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 14 June, p.18; Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 14 June. // A 50 cm long aligator turtle was found in a dry pond at the Bayer factory at Krefeld, Germany. The turtle must have been living there in the wild for several years, probably an escaped pet that entered the pond via an arm of the river Rhine - Stuttgarter Nachrichten 14 June, p.10.

#### FORTEAN TIDBITS

- After a long drought, King Fahd of Saudia Arabia asks the populace to pray for rain, in accordance with guidelines established by Mohamed. I don't know if the prayers were successful - Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, 18 April 1994, p. 14
- An architect from Kirchheim believes he has found Atlantis. This time, it is situated in Marocco south of Agadir - Stuttgarter Zeitung 22 February 1992, p. 124
- The dinosaur Procompsognathus, found in two examples years ago at the Stromberg Mountain in Baden-Württemberg, are legendary creatures that never existed. Recent reconstructions have shown them to consist of the bones of several creatures from two different species. (Bietigheimer Zeitung, 20 May, p. 34)
- Five new species of fish have been discovered during scientific investigations of Papua New Guinea (Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung 16 June).
- New methods of fishery threaten the Coelacant, famous living fossil of the Comores Island, with extinction. Scientists estimate the whole Coelacanth population at about 200 to 230 animals (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 29 March, p. N3).



#### CRYPTOZOOLOGY

- Yeti in China: I have two conflicting news items on the most recent Chinese yeti expedition. First, on May 20, p.2, the taz reported that an expedition for the yeti had returned after weeks of search without a trace of the creature. On June 10, p.7, the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung said a Chinese expedition had returned with "indirect evidence" for the yeti after an intense search of the mountains of Hubei. The scientist Wang Fanchen told Xinhua on June 9 he had filed 114 sightings of the yeti spanning the last 70 years.

This ends another Bilk. Again, apart from recent biological discoveries (none of them, again, predicted by cryptozoologists) there is little news of sea and lake monsters. Please remember your news and views are always welcome - Ulrich.